



From the Master: Dr Alan Munro

THE MASTER'S LODGE, CHRIST'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE CB2 3BU

8th March 2002

The Registry
The Old Schools
Trinity Lane
Cambridge
CB2 1TN

Dear Tim

The Governing Body of Christ's College has now considered the consultation paper on Governance. It wished to emphasise the importance of the collegiate nature of this University as a major contributing factor to its current success. The retention of College teaching was seen as vital, coupled with the support of teaching and research, particularly in the Arts, through College Fellowships.

The Governing Body was concerned about the increase in size of the new University Council, but would not support a reduction of the elected Heads of House from four to three. They would prefer to see a reduction in the elected representatives of the newly expanded Regent House.

The Governing Body also noted and valued the present arrangements to ensure flow of information between the University and the Colleges, particularly the regular meetings of the Standing Committee with the Planning and Resource Sub-Committee of the Council, and the Senior Tutors' Education Standing Committee with the Teaching Sub-Committee of the General Board. They would strongly support that these arrangements were formalised through a University Ordinance.

Yours sincerely



Churchill College
Cambridge CB3 0DS

Sir John Boyd, KCMG
Master

The Registry
The Old Schools
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CB2 1TN

6 March, 2002

Dear Tim,

Governance

I am writing on behalf of this College in response to the Vice-Chancellor's letter of 5 February. The College has had every chance to look at the proposals. Expressions of concern have been, by and large, lacking, the implication being, I hope, that we are all busy rather than indifferent.

The College Council have examined the proposals carefully. In summary, we are for the reform drive, believe it to be timely and appropriate, hope very much that the outcome will reflect a broad consensus. We would welcome a shift towards clear rules, transparency in operation and simplicity. One speaker at our College Council summed up the requirement as the need for a new ethos.

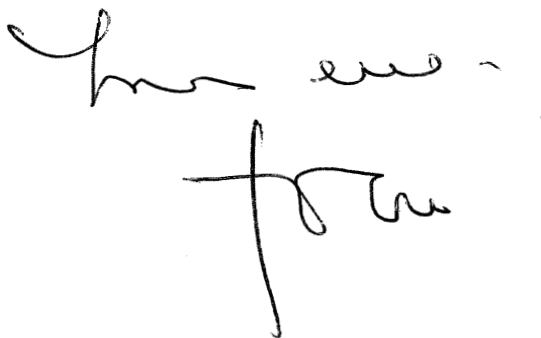
Particular observations were;

1. The need to make it crystal clear that this is a collegiate university (with the benefits that are, I hope, generally apparent)
2. By the same token, to underline the fact that we are here to educate people
3. Care to be taken over the implications of major structural change (particularly in the composition of the Regent House) for the distribution of tasks between the University and the Colleges. In other words a heavy shift towards a "purely science" university and a diminution of the perceived importance of undergraduate teaching could be two unintended consequences of reform of the Regent House.
4. Support for the incorporation of external figures on Council (but with stress, including from our students, on individual quality and transparency in the selection process)
5. Support also for the inclusion on council, by one means or another, of representation from the Councils of the Schools (with some concern as to whether the Chairs will in real life have the time for Council or be able to deliver their constituencies). Some concern was expressed about the

likely size of the new Council but no one here had a precise recommendation to make.

6. Notwithstanding this comment, a general dislike of a Council made up simply of constituency representatives (rather little enthusiasm therefore for a dedicated Senior Tutor slot - but, as noted above, a strong hope that College voices will, in practice, be included at a number of levels.)
7. Support for a broadened and deepened Regent House matched with the observation that points of detail will be fought over

It will not surprise you to know that the College Council felt quite strongly that female colleagues might have been invited to play a greater role in developing the proposals. The general feeling was, I think, that reform of Governance might usefully be matched by new thinking and action on this front.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'John ...' followed by a large, stylized flourish.

Cc The Secretary, The Colleges' Committee.



CLARE COLLEGE
CAMBRIDGE

RESPONSE TO UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE CONSULTATION PAPER

- 1 The Council of Clare College agrees with the University Council that there is an urgent need to improve the central management, decision-making and accountability of the University. Among the main faults with the present arrangements are:
 - disconnection between the people who work in the University (academic and non-academic) and the administration – a cultural divide between “them” and “us”
 - lack of transparency as to how and where key decisions of policy in the University are made
 - poor and slow flows of information between different constituent elements in the University
 - massive inertia that impedes even small changes.

- 2 In our view a major reason for these faults is the muddle between the policy and executive functions of the University Council. It is not clear that the proposals in the Consultation Paper will resolve this confusion. A Council with 26 members is too large to act as an executive body – those of us with experience of the present Council of 20 members have found that it either acts as a rubber stamp for decisions taken by others, or attempts to get too closely involved in operational detail. It is neither satisfactory as a policy-making body, nor as a monitor of executive action.

- 3 In our view the Council should be a policy-making and monitoring body, and not an executive. For this purpose it should be broadly representative of all the constituencies within the University. We welcome the addition of representatives of the Assistant Staff, and also at least three external members. Those of us with experience in other Universities appreciate the enormous contribution that such members can make. An independent Chairman can be highly effective in supporting the Vice-Chancellor (who as Chief Executive is accountable to the Council), while ensuring that the focus is on policy and monitoring. More thought needs to be given as to how the independent members would be selected and appointed ; a high degree of commitment to the University (as alumni or otherwise) is to be expected.

- 4 The Council must reflect the collegiate nature of the University, by having adequate representation from the Colleges. The Consultation Paper paras.2.5 and 4.1(iii) recognises this, but somewhat curiously (and without explanation) proposes a reduction from 4 to 3 in the number of College Heads on the Council, while at the same time proposing a larger Council. Both symbolically and in practical terms it would undermine the collegiate nature of the University if a reduction were to be made. Consideration should however be given to including among the College representatives at least one Senior Tutor.
- 5 The Consultation Paper fails to recognise adequately the responsibilities of the Colleges in the University. These include-
- Undergraduate recruitment for the University
 - All undergraduate admissions
 - Pastoral support for undergraduates and postgraduates
 - Financial support for undergraduates and postgraduates, including rent subsidies
 - Residential accommodation for nearly all students
 - Substantial support for the supervision system, including both financial subsidy and the employment of College Teaching Officers.
 - Provision of essential facilities for many University Teaching Officers not provided by the Faculties or the University, including rooms, meals, research and IT support, book and housing subsidies
 - Support for postdoctoral research through JRFs..

In recent years a number of joint bodies have been set up on an informal basis in order to improve co-operation between the Colleges and the University on these and other matters. Any reform of governance should put committees such as the Joint Standing Committee, the Senior Tutors' Committee, and the 3x3 Personnel Committee on a more formal basis, so as to ensure that this co-operation is maintained and developed.

- 6 There are several other University bodies where a more formal role for the Colleges could be recognised. A good model is the Information Technology Syndicate which supervises the University's Computing Service. This includes two nominees of the Senior Tutors' Committee and one nominee of the Bursars' Committee in recognition of the role of the Computing Service in supporting College computing. If the General Board is to continue to have responsibility for the academic affairs of the University, and to deliver quality in teaching, it would follow that there should be one or two representatives of the Senior Tutors' Committee on the General Board.
- 7 Another way in which the Colleges' role could be better recognised, is to ensure that one or more of the proposed Pro-Vice-Chancellors is a Head of House. In any event one PVC should have express responsibility for College-University relations. The present proposals envisage that a PVC would be committed to two-thirds' time serving the University. In practice this would probably rule out any serving Head of House (unless granted special leave by

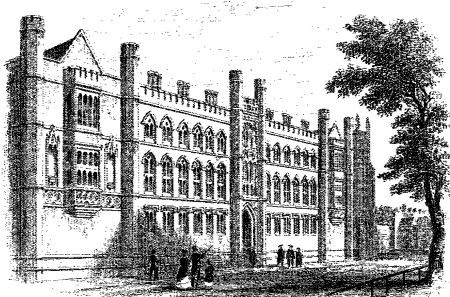
the College). The arrangements need to be made more flexible so that PVCs can combine their College and University responsibilities. A regular rotation of Heads of House as PVC would be desirable.

- 8 The operational executive body should consist of the Vice-Chancellor (who should become in effect a Chief Executive) , the PVCs (at least one of whom is a Head of House), the Head of the Unified Administrative Service, and the Chairman of the Schools, and the Chairman of the Colleges Committee. This Executive should meet frequently, and report to and be monitored by the Council, which meets at least once a month. The proposal that all six Chairs of Schools should also sit on the Council would tend to make much of the Council's business a contest between these six baronies, instead of a shared planning process between representative constituents of the University who take a broader view of the whole. This overweighting in favour of the Schools must also be a particular concern in the light of the recent RAM proposals. All the Schools are more properly represented on the General Board, and on the Executive which we have proposed.
- 9 The Council should be accountable to the Regent House (and we support the proposals for its enlargement). However, the present form of so-called "Discussions" is antiquated and ineffective. The University's website should be expanded so that any member of the University can publish views on the University's business. Discussions should be turned into clearly focussed debates on important policy issues, and for calling the Council to account. Strict rules as to relevance should be enforced by the Chair. At least once a term the Vice-Chancellor should make an oral report to the Regent House explaining what is going on in the University followed by questions and comments from members of the University. In addition to expanding the University website to allow for comments, consideration should be given to replacing the Reporter with a more informative weekly newsletter, publishing official acts either at the end of this, or in a slimmed-down Reporter.
- 10 Opinions among us are divided as to whether the number of signatories to amend or challenge a Grace should be increased from 10 to 50 or some other number. On balance the majority view appears to favour an increase in the number but only if adequate time is given to raise signatures. The opportunity to mount such a challenge is seen to be an important safeguard for minority interests.
- 11 Finally we make a plea for a complete revision of the University Statutes and Regulations to make them simpler and more user-friendly, as has been done in Oxford. A number of procedures (e.g. Statute K.5 on representations regarding irregularities) are antiquated, and need to be overhauled .

14 March, 2002

B. A. Kempe
MASTER

CORPUS CHRISTI
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Dr T J Mead
The Registry
The Old Schools
University of Cambridge

19 March 2002

Dear Tim

The response from Corpus Christi College is based on a discussion of the proposals at a meeting of the Executive body of the College and on contributions from individual Fellows.

The College will discuss the proposal again at a meeting of the Governing Body next term and may wish to make further comments.

Yours sincerely

Master



University Governance: response from Corpus Christi College to the 4th February 2002 consultation paper.

General comments

Considerable concern was expressed about the scale and scope of the changes suggested for the governance of the university, which seem to be both disproportionate and disconnected to the problems which have been identified. Indeed, it is not clear exactly what problems these proposed reforms seek to address. While there certainly have been difficulties over some issues such as the mis-managed introduction of CAPSA, the University remains an extremely successful institution. Whenever rankings are made of universities in terms of either research or teaching, Cambridge always appears in the top flight, both nationally and internationally. This position reflects not only the quality and commitment of its faculty, but also the sense in which it remains an institution led by academic and scholarly values. Given the University's continuing prominence as a leading international institution, it is difficult to see quite what the problems are which these proposals seek to redress, especially when their scope would increase the dominance of central administrative and managerial functions to the detriment of Cambridge's traditional reliance on academic leadership and its Collegiate structure. While the principles of transparency and accountability are admirable in themselves, it is not clear that they would be secured by these reforms which would introduce a very strong centralising power into what has been a relatively open and democratic institution. Indeed these proposed reforms might threaten the University's position by introducing here the same managerial regimes which have created such difficulties in other UK Universities. It also seems pertinent to ask whether the end of the present Vice Chancellor's tenure is really the proper time to be considering such weighty changes? Oughtn't they to be the first concern of an incoming V-C appointed with this in mind?

There also appears to be a lack of clarity about the relationship between these proposals for changing the governance of the University and the concomitant proposals to introduce a new Resource Allocation Model. While the RAM may not strictly be of direct concern to Colleges, if its introduction has significant consequences for the way in which the University undertakes teaching and research this will have indirect consequences for Colleges. It would be helpful to consider both of these proposals in the framework of a single discussion when it would become possible to consider the extent to which the proposals for changing the structures of governance of the University are either driven by or closely associated with the needs to manage the new RAM.

Concern was also expressed about the way in which these proposals have been presented to the press and to the public through the University's web site which have made it appear as though the proposals were already accepted by the university community.

Specific comments

We would prefer the term for the Vice-Chancellor to remain as 5+2 as at present, rather than for 7 years, which would in itself contribute substantially to reinforcing the powers of the V-C. The 5+2 period allows an honourable exit rather than the draconian procedure proposed in the document for the removal of a failing V-C. While we can see a case for creating a separate Chair of the Council, to nominate an independent member to this position would risk creating divergent sources of authority, especially in regard to questions of public relations where it would have the potential for creating serious conflicts about who spoke with authority for the University. We should prefer our own V-C to be our most significant spokesperson.

The new posts of Pro-Vice-Chancellor are inadequately described. What functions would these posts fulfil, and what powers would be attributed to them? The expectation that these posts might occupy 67% of the time of persons nominated would effectively exclude Heads of House of most Colleges for whom this would be an intolerable burden.

The proposals are unclear about how increasing the powers of the Vice-Chancellor is to be reconciled with also increasing the powers of the Councils of the Schools.

We are unhappy about the very significant reduction in the representation of the Colleges on the Council, and also about the failure to include stronger representation from the Senior Tutors to the Council and to the General Board.

Although the College wishes to be inclusive with regard to post-doctoral University research staff and has operated a Research Associateship scheme since 1990, it is also sceptical of the proposal to increase the size of the Regent House. It would seem essential that any increase should be limited to those people who have a contract of more than three years with the University or with a College. Is it the intention to include Visiting Fellows and short-term staff?

The College can understand that while the present number of signatures required to support a request for a ballot might be thought to be too small, but it regards 50 as too large. Such a figure would deprive small groups with a real grievance the opportunity of bringing their case forward. A more modest increase from the present 10 to about 20 would seem a more appropriate change.

H Ahmed

Council's Consultation Paper on Governance

Comments from Downing College

The Vice-Chancellor

It will be helpful if the Vice-Chancellor is given a more explicit role as the leading academic and administrative officer of the University and also greater authority and power to discharge these responsibilities.

He or she might indeed be given responsibility for the overall direction and management of the University and its finances, but surely under the Council. Otherwise the Council is relegated from the principal policy-making body of the University to a moderating and advisory body. The proposal that the Vice-Chancellor should no longer chair the Council is not supported. Some of his or her authority derives from the chairmanship of the Council giving the opportunity to lead in that forum as well as more widely. The appointment of one of the three new external members to this role, places a figure unfamiliar with the University in the Chair and weakens the position of the Vice-Chancellor. This point is relevant to the Colleges, the Vice-Chancellor is currently well placed to represent the views of the Colleges at the Council, being a member of the Colleges' Committee and Chairman of the Senior Tutor's Committee. His ability to do this will be weakened if he is not the Chairman, but an officer of Council. As Chairman he can still be accountable to the Council; indeed as accounting officer as far as HEFCE is concerned he is already accountable for much of the activity of the University. Leadership in the form of Chairmanship of the Council fits better with the fundamental framework of the University as a self-governing community of scholars. A Vice-Chancellor acting too explicitly as a Chief Executive will find it harder to maintain the essential level of collective support and consensus at Faculty, Departmental and College level.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellors

It is clearly important that the Vice-Chancellor should be supported by experienced and senior University figures to whom he or she can delegate a range of duties. However, the more Pro-Vice-Chancellors there are the more time will need to be spent in co-ordinating their work, and supporting them administratively. It is likely to be more efficient to have a smaller number of Pro-Vice-Chancellors each working for the major fraction of their time, than a larger number each working a smaller fraction. The relative volume and nature of the tasks to be undertaken by the Pro-Vice Chancellors also needs careful thought. Much executive action and thinking on forward policy is undertaken by the administrative staff of the University, particularly the Registry, Secretary General, Treasurer, and now the Directors. There is some risk of having more Generals than Colonels, leading to a multiplicity of new ideas and proposals at the conceptual level with insufficient support staff to convert new proposals efficiently into working practices.

influence of the Colleges, since many Regent House members currently elected to Council have close involvement with Colleges.

The University Council should logically be the representative body or cabinet of the academic community, and should reflect the balance of membership of that body. Its membership should comprise those best placed to plan and direct the work of the University.

The Chairs of Schools clearly have a central role in the academic and educational affairs of the University which are to remain the primary responsibility (under the Council) of the General Board. Their membership of that Board is therefore entirely appropriate.

The same does not, however, appear to be the case for their membership of the Council. Apart from adding substantially to their workload, their membership introduces a powerful block onto the Council focussing specifically on Faculties and Departments. Although this is a major part of University activities, it does not encompass the whole picture – otherwise why not combine the Council and General Board into one body? It would be preferable for the six places allocated to Chairmen to be filled by Professors and Readers, elected by the Regent House, ensuring a better balance on the Council. The thrust of the proposals should, in any event, be in the direction of a smaller rather than a larger Council. A body of 26 members will be unlikely to operate effectively as a coherent body. A body closer to half that size would be better placed to undertake executive and policy-making actions on behalf of the University.

Involvement of Colleges in University policy-making

The Colleges currently have a chance to participate in discussion of University policy in a number of ways. The Chairman and Secretary of the Colleges' Committee together with the officers of the Senior Tutors' and Bursars' Committee form a Colleges Standing Committee which meets twice a term. This Committee in turn meets regularly with representatives of the University's Planning and Resources Committee. Meetings are also held from time to time with the University's Personnel Committee. The point was made at the Colleges' Committee on 9 February that it would be desirable if mechanisms for input by Colleges into University governance were provided for explicitly rather than left to depend on informal arrangements which may be agreed from time to time. This seems a good point, with which Downing concurs. More generally there should be greater provision to ensure that the views of Colleges are known when strategic issues and policy-making matters are discussed at key committees. This point might be met by providing explicitly for College members on these bodies.

Regent House

It is proposed that Membership of the Regent House should be expanded to include all academic and academic related staff who are employed on 'unestablished contracts' subject to reasonable provision for a qualifying period of service. As a consequence it is envisaged that the Regent House will expand from ~3200 to over 5000 members.

Of the unestablished staff, Senior Research Associates and Research Associates are already eligible for membership (Statutes and Ordinances, p6, footnote 1). The remaining category of Research Assistant comprises more junior unestablished workers often doing a PhD while working on a contract. If the minimum qualifying period is set at three years most of these staff will be excluded anyway, but if a shorter period is specified many more staff with little involvement with the running of the University will be given a vote. Their colleagues, research students doing a PhD, who are supported on studentships from Research Councils etc. will not be similarly enfranchised. Care needs to be exercised before adding a large new category of staff to the Regent House. From the College point of view the balance of the Regent House is already very largely tilted in the direction of scientific and research staff with little involvement in College affairs. Hence any votes on issues close to the interests of the College already fall to be determined by an electorate which is predominantly made up of staff with no College connection. The new proposals risk shifting the balance even further away from the Colleges. The same point applies as far as the Arts/Science balance is concerned since unestablished workers are mainly scientists.

More fundamentally the question should be asked whether a smaller Regent House would not be more effective as the Governing Body of the University albeit as legislative rather than an executive body. Just as the Senate became unwieldy and lost its powers in 1926, so a Regent House of 5000 will have a reduced credibility as a Governing Body. A smaller body comprising those members of the academic community active in guiding the work of the Faculties, Departments, and Colleges, would be a more credible and effective Governing Body.

The further proposal made for the Regent House is that the calling of a ballot or a Discussion should in future require the request of 50 members instead of 10. As pointed out by the Principal of Homerton at the meeting of the Colleges' Committee on 9 February, issues not infrequently arise which affect closely an institution within the University where the collecting of 50 signatures could be difficult. To cope with such issues a requirement for (say) 25 signatures would be preferable. Calls for ballots and Discussions have in any event been rare, and have not usually been introduced irresponsibly. It should also be remembered that enough time needs to be allowed between the publication of a Grace and the calling of a ballot. If the number of signatures required is increased the current time interval of ten days will be insufficient.

By contrast Discussions are these days often misused, with remarks made on quite extraneous topics about which individual speakers wish to put down markers. The publishing of a code of practice for Discussions could be useful in curbing abuse and helping to ensure that Discussions, which can be a valuable forum for the exchange of views, are not abandoned because of the way they are being used.

**S G Fleet
Master**